

PATENT
Docket No.: HI02001USU1 (P01018USU1)
Serial No.: 10/632,433

REMARKS

STATUS SUMMARY

Claims 3 – 33 are pending in the present application. Claims 1 and 2 were previously canceled without prejudice. Claims 27 – 33 are withdrawn as being directed to non-elected subject matter. Claims 23 – 26 are allowed. Claims 5 and 17 are objected to, but would be allowable if rewritten in independent form including all limitations of the base claim and any intervening claims. Claims 3, 4, 6 – 16 and 18 – 22 presently stand rejected. In the present Amendment, Applicant has amended claims 3, 5, 6, 8, 9, 13, 17 and 18, canceled claims 4, 15 and 16, and added claims 34 – 43.

CLAIM REJECTIONS – 35 USC § 102

Claims 3, 4, 6 – 16 and 18 – 22 are rejected under 35 USC § 102(b) as being anticipated by U.S. Patent No. 6,023,812 (the ‘812 Patent). Applicant respectfully traverses this rejection because the ‘812 Patent fails to teach each and every element or feature recited in these claims.

Claim 3 has been amended to incorporate the features or elements of claim 4, and claim 4 has been canceled accordingly. Claim 3 as amended recites that “the interface section is movably coupled to the shaft.”

In the Office Action mailed October 17, 2005, the Examiner directed attention to Figure 7 of the ‘812 Patent. Figures 3 and 4 of the ‘812 Patent illustrate details of the

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embodiment shown in Figure 7 of the '812 Patent. Referring to Figures 3 and 4, the '812 Patent discloses an adapter that serves as a means for coupling a broom handle to the bar member (2) of a mop. The adapter has a cylindrical body (22), which the Examiner considers as being an "interface." The adapter also has a pawl (38), which the examiner considers as being a "pivot arm." The shaft (6) of the bar member (2) is insertable into the central slot (32) of the body (22) along a direction from right to left. In contrast to the invention recited in claim 3 as amended, the shaft (6) is freely movable in the central slot (32) of the body (22), and therefore the body (22) cannot be said to be "movably coupled to the shaft."

The function of the pawl (38) further evidences this distinction. The pawl (38) pivots (or rotates) about a pin (44) that lies along a direction axis orthogonal to the right-to-left direction of insertion of the shaft (6). The tip (50) of the pawl (38) has threads (42) that mate with the threads (10) on the shaft (6) to hold the shaft (6) in place relative to the body (22), when the pawl (38) is in the position shown in Figure 4. Because the body (22) is not "movably coupled to the shaft," the shaft (6) can be quickly removed from the body (22) by depressing the pawl (38) such that the pawl (38) pivots and the threads (42) of the pawl (38) become disengaged from the threads (10) of the shaft (6). This quick-release feature is a primary, intended feature of the '812 Patent (see the '812 Patent, abstract & col. 7 line 64 to col. 8, line 4), and would be inoperable if the body (22) were "movably coupled to the shaft."

Claim 4 has been canceled, and therefore the rejection to claim 4 is moot.

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Claims 6 – 12 depend directly or indirectly from claim 3, and therefore are distinguishable over the '812 Patent for at least the same reasons as regards claim 3.

Independent claim 13 has been amended to incorporate the features or elements of claims 15 and 16, and claims 15 and 16 have been canceled accordingly. Claim 13 as amended recites that "the shaft is movably coupled to the interface section." Therefore, claim 13 is distinguishable over the '812 Patent for at least the same reasons as regards claim 3.

Claim 14 depends from claim 13, and therefore is distinguishable over the '812 Patent for at least the same reasons as regards claim 13.

Claims 15 and 16 have been canceled, and therefore the rejection to claims 15 and 16 is moot.

Claims 18 – 22 depend directly or indirectly from claim 13, and therefore are distinguishable over the '812 Patent for at least the same reasons as regards claim 13.

In view of the foregoing, Applicant respectfully submits that claims 3, 4, 6 – 16 and 18 – 22 are patentable over the '812 Patent, and respectfully requests that the rejection to these claims be withdrawn.

OTHER CLAIM AMENDMENTS

Apart from the amendments specifically discussed above, other claim amendments have been made in this Amendment to dependent claims. Specifically, claims 5, 6, 8, and 9 have been amended for the sole purpose of conforming to the amendment made to claim 3, and claims 17 and 18 have been amended for the sole purpose of conforming to the

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amendment made to claim 13. These amendments are not believed to have been made directly in response to a substantive rejection or for any purpose believed to relate to patentability. These amendments are believed to be supported by the application as originally filed. Accordingly, no new matter is believed to have been added.

NEW CLAIMS

New claims 34 – 43 have been added. Claims 34 – 43 are believed to be supported by the Application as originally filed. Accordingly, no new matter is believed to have been added. Claims 34 – 43 are believed to be patentable over the prior art of record. Therefore, Applicant respectfully requests entry and allowance of claims 34 – 43.

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CONCLUSION

In light of the above amendments and remarks, it is respectfully submitted that the present application is now in proper condition for allowance, and an early notice to such effect is earnestly solicited.

If any small matter should remain outstanding after the Patent Examiner has had an opportunity to review the above Remarks, the Patent Examiner is respectfully requested to telephone the undersigned patent attorney in order to resolve these matters and avoid the issuance of another Office Action.

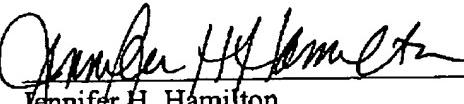
The Commissioner is authorized to charge any additional fees that may be required, or credit any overpayment, to our Deposit Account No. 50-2542. A copy of this sheet is enclosed.

Respectfully submitted,

THE ECLIPSE GROUP

Date: February 17, 2006

By:



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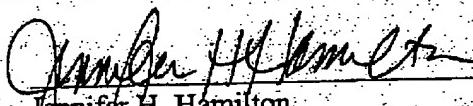
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